



PRESS RELEASE

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SEVEN YEAR SENTENCE IN COUNTERFEIT ATM CARD SCHEME

PHOENIX – Jagdish Singh, 21, of Tolleson, Ariz., was sentenced here on June 17, 2005, to seven years in prison, followed by five years of supervised release by U.S. District Judge David G. Campbell. Singh was sentenced to 84 months in prison on counts 2-7, and was given the statutory maximum sentence of 60 months in prison on count 1, all sentences to run concurrently.

The evidence at trial and sentencing showed that Jagdish Singh and four others obtained nearly \$430,000 from the accounts of 277 customers of nine financial institutions in Phoenix during four bursts of activity between April 2001 and May 2003. Some of the funds were obtained through unauthorized withdrawals in Canada and in the United Kingdom, including Glasgow, Scotland. Jagdish was a clerk at five different convenience marts where customer debit card and PIN information was fraudulently obtained. Information and card-writing equipment, including blank magnetic stripe cards, were used to create counterfeit cards therefore the group could use at ATMs to access accounts and withdraw funds. Jagdish's two brothers who live in Glasgow, Scotland, Gurdev Singh Dhnoay and Lakhvir Singh, were identified in ATM security photos using counterfeit cards and the stolen PIN numbers to make withdrawals. Two additional United Kingdom residents were recruited to assist in making withdrawals in May 2003. The scheme was undone when a citizen called the Gilbert Police Department to complain that an individual had been standing at an ATM making withdrawals for about 45 minutes. Police were able to locate the suspect, and the scheme began to unravel, according to the evidence at trial.

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The jury also found that approximately \$90,000 found on or with the defendants on May 3 and 4, 2003, was subject to forfeiture as proceeds of the offenses, and Judge Campbell ordered those funds forfeited.

In imposing sentence, Judge Campbell noted that the criminal scheme was extensive, complex, and targeted hundreds of innocent victims. The judge also noted that the sentence was meant to provide adequate deterrence for crimes of this sort, as identity crimes are becoming increasingly more common. Jagdish Singh fell to his knees during the sentencing proceeding and offered prayers of forgiveness.

Jagdish Singh had been found guilty by jury on December 17, 2004, on all seven counts of the indictment. Lakvir Singh was charged but fled before he could be arrested. Gurdev Singh Dhnoay was arrested and posted \$50,000 bond. He fled before arraignment, however, and the bond was forfeited. Warrants remain outstanding for Lakhvir Singh and Gurdev Singh Dhnoay.

The investigation leading to the guilty verdict was conducted by the FBI and the Gilbert Police Department. The prosecution was handled by Daniel R. Drake, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

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